

MTD Quick Tips

Ask And You Shall Receive

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During the past 6 months we have been running a major Management Development Programme for the Government.

During an "Effective Coaching Skills" module I was asked a very good question by one of the delegates.

Let me share it with you.

"Sean, sometimes I can get stuck with what questions to ask my staff when I am coaching them. Have you got any scripted questions you could give me as a prompt before a coaching session so that I can go into the session prepared?"

I thought that was a great question. I then spent the next 20 minutes going through some of the most effective questions you can ask whilst coaching your staff.

Here's a summary of useful questions when you're coaching.

Questions to clarify outcomes

- What would you rather have?
- What would you like instead?
- How can you turn that problem into a goal?
- What can you do to influence this?
- What will it look like, sound like, feel like… when you have…?
- If you could have this right now, on a plate, would you take it?
- What might be the undesirable or negative consequences of achieving this goal?
- What's your first step? Next step? Final step?
- What resources do you need to support you in this?
- What would you like to do differently?
- What would you like to see?
- Where do you see yourself?
- Where would you like to be?
- How would you like to feel …?
- What is your desired outcome?
- What results do you want?
- What timescale are we looking at?
- What's an appropriate deadline?
- What are the milestones we can track along the way?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how compelled are you to do this?

Questions to aid moving from current reality to desired reality

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- Has this happened to you (or to someone you know) before? What did you (or they) do to overcome it?
- Has there ever been a time when…. What was it like?
- How would you sell your idea (if you can't, is it the right one?)
- What tools do you know about that you haven't used yet? Which will you try?
- What tools do you need to help you?
- How can we turn this around?
- In what way would you like to change the way you operate?
- What could you change/do to make the situation more positive?
- What current tools have you used? Which worked? Which didn't? Why?
- What do you think could be done to alter the situation?
- How can you change the situation?
- How could you get tools within the organisation to help you?
- How do you see yourself getting your desired outcome?
- How will you achieve…?
- What have you tried so far?
- What is stopping you achieving your goal?
- What needs to happen for ….?
- What will enable you to achieve X, and how will you feel once you have?
- What will feel, seem or look different if you achieve X?
- What will your life be like when you are able to ….?
- What would make the biggest difference to the way you work?
- What would you like to be able to do as a result of being here?
- How do you consider that we can achieve this objective?
- How could you turn this around immediately, and enjoy the process?
- Who already does this really well? (benchmark excellence)
- How did (company xyz) crack this problem when they had it?
- What research could you do that would give you more ideas?

Questions to challenge the way coachee perceives the situation

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- Does the problem really lie in the task, or the way you feel about the task?
- What assumptions are you making that may be questionable?
- What "rules" are you using that could be challenged?
- What are resources you haven't used before, that you could try?
- How would you deal with it if you were a man? (or woman, or child of 7, or a wise guru, or managing director, the Pope, etc. etc.)
- What would (insert name of coachee's hero) do in this situation?
- What would you do if your bonus depended on the satisfactory resolution of this problem? (variations: or your job, or your life!)
- What would the best manager in your company do?
- How will your team react to the change in your skills and how will that make you feel?
- What would you try now if you knew that you could not fail?
- What would you do now if you were already the person you know you have the potential of becoming?
- What's the positive intention of this?

Questions to change their state

- What's the most appropriate state for you to be in right now, as you solve this problem?
- Can you think of a time when you felt completely (insert appropriate state e.g. confident and unstoppable, creative, persuasive, calm, etc.)? See what you were seeing, hear what you were hearing, feel what you were feeling then… now allow that feeling to grow and intensify in your body as you focus on the current situation.
- Change their physiology - either overtly: How would you be sitting (or standing) right now if you knew you were totally capable and confident? (or whatever state)
- Or more covertly: "Let's go for a walk (or to grab a coffee) whilst we talk about this"
- How good do you really want to feel right now?
- Can you notice all the ways in which you'll grow and develop from this assignment?
- Take yourself into the future now and think about having achieved this objective in a way which is totally successful, and just allow and enjoy those feelings of success and achievement. Now come back to the present moment, bringing those feelings with you. What new possibilities do you become aware of?
- I know you can do this. Do you?

Questions to capture learning

- How could we/you have done this more effectively?
- Looking back now, what did you learn?
- What can you learn from this?
- What's the biggest thing you would have done differently, with the benefit of hindsight?
- How have you learned the skills that you now have?
- What helps you to remember skills you have now as second nature - how does it feel?
- How will you pass on these skills/these insights to other members of your team?
- How will you practice these skills in other areas of your life?
- May I ask for your feedback?

Questions to offer support

- What can I do to help/support you in this?
- What am I already doing that is helping?
- What other support/resources do you need to get this done?
- What's the one question I could ask you now that would really make a difference?

Okay, I hope those help you out!

Our 2 Day "Coaching For Managers" course is one of our most popular courses because it is all geared around the development of your people - your most prized asset!

If you would like more information on that course please visit:
http://www.m-t-d.co.uk/coaching.htm

Like always if you have got any questions for me please do not hesitate to drop me an email or call me.

Live, love and laugh

Sean

Sean McPheat
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About Sean McPheat



Sean McPheat

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Founder and MD of international management development firm MTD Training, Sean McPheat is widely regarded as a leading authority on modern day management and leadership.

Sean is a bestselling author, and has been recognised for his own business building skills through the **British Business Awards** and has been featured in the **Who's Who Of Britain's Business Elite**.

He has been a regular judge for the UK's Young Enterprise Programme but was not as horrible as Simon Cowell (well almost!)



Sean has been featured on **CNN International, the BBC, SKY, ITV, The Guardian, Forbes, Arena Magazine, Marketing Weekly, Business Zone, Winning Edge** and radio stations such as BBC WM and LBC (London's Big Conversation).

Sean has over **250 media credits** to his name and his weekly email tips go out to over **60,000 people** interested in management and development strategies.

Sean is also a **much sought after media figure and motivational speaker** on all topics related to management, HR, business improvement and entrepreneurialism.